

**INDIANA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
TURNAROUND LEADERSHIP ACADEMY REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS**

**QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS
MARCH 9, 2010**

Q: Can you provide a list of interested responders? How many contractors are applying? Does the state have a preferred vendor whom we could learn from?

A: IDOE does not release the names of bidders until after a contract is awarded and the procurement file becomes public. There is no preferred vendor for this RFP.

Q: Is there a list of companies that this RFP went to?

A: IDOE does not post the names of vendors contacted. The RFP is available to all vendors and was posted on February 26, 2010 to both the IDOA and IDOE websites.

Q: Is IDOE looking for individual principals or others such as universities to train principals, or for turnaround firms to serve as the lead on this effort?

A: IDOE will consider responses from all qualified respondents who have prior experience and success identifying and preparing leaders to transform distressed organizations.

Q: What service is IDOE seeking from this RFP?

A: IDOE is seeking to establish a Turnaround Leadership Academy to identify, recruit, train, and develop transformational leaders who will focus on the challenge of turning around our state's chronically lowest-achieving schools.

Q: Our company does turnaround work in other states and is familiar with the needs. Is IDOE seeking a turnaround provider?

A: This RFP is not requesting responses for organizations to partner with schools that need turnaround support. Rather, this RFP focuses on building the leadership pipeline and developing a potential source of outstanding principals for struggling schools. However, IDOE expects to release an RFI for turnaround management organizations in the near future.

Q: Will this project be a multi-week training session, or a full-time academy?

A: IDOE expects respondents to outline an appropriate duration for the Turnaround Leadership Academy that efficiently and effectively fulfills the deliverables outlined in the RFP. Moreover, IDOE is seeking independent sustainability for this particular project.

Q: Is this a new program?

A: The Turnaround Leadership Academy represents a new IDOE initiative.

Q: Will IDOE use M/WBE participation as part of the selection criteria?

A: IDOE will be consistent with Minority and Women's Business Enterprises requirements as set forth in Indiana Statute and in the Indiana Administrative Code.

Q: What is the funding source for the Turnaround Leadership Academy? Is funding contingent on state receipt of federal funds?

A: IDOE is in the process of identifying funding sources for the Turnaround Leadership Academy. Although Indiana did not receive federal dollars to implement this initiative, the Turnaround Leadership Academy is part of IDOE's reform agenda and IDOE intends to proceed forward to ensure a great leader in every school, especially our lowest-achieving ones.

Q: What is the scope of the Turnaround Leadership Academy in terms of the number of districts and school leaders to be worked with in the base year? How many TLA leaders does IDOE expect to be involved in this program?

A: IDOE anticipates the Turnaround Leadership Academy will work with up to twenty leaders each year. The number of districts will likely not exceed ten. However, these figures are estimates. IDOE expects respondents to suggest a scope that is consistent with the specifics of their proposals.

Q: What is the projected funding amount for the Turnaround Leadership Academy base year?

A: IDOE will use proposals from respondents to make a funding determination for the Turnaround Leadership Academy.

Q: Is it correct that some of the other pathways listed in Indiana's Fast Forward plan are potential sources of recruits for the Turnaround Leadership Academy? What are other potential sources of recruits?

A: No. The other pathways highlighted in Fast Forward are independent of the Turnaround Leadership Academy. It will be incumbent upon the respondent to identify and recruit talent for this initiative.

Q: How does IDOE plan to ensure that various initiatives and efforts related to turnaround leadership are coordinated and mutually supportive?

A: IDOE is in the process of building out a comprehensive approach to school turnaround efforts, including turnaround leadership. Further details can be found in Section E of Fast Forward.

Q: Does the TLA leader work with the school principal or is the TLA leader the school principal?

A: The TLA leader is the school principal. In some cases, he/she may also be an assistant principal prior to assuming the principalship.

Q: Could you clarify what “accept accountability for academic performance of students” means?

A: IDOE will monitor the success of TLA leaders, and the Turnaround Leadership Academy, as measured in part by the performance outcomes of the schools they lead. This data will be used to determine whether IDOE elects to renew any contract entered into with a selected vendor. In some instances, inadequate performance may result in other actions including, but not limited to, the withholding or recoupment of funds.

Q: Please clarify the expectation as to when the training will begin for the TLA leaders.

A: IDOE expects the Turnaround Leadership Academy to be implemented by August 23, 2010. The specific training timeline will be determined by the respondent in coordination with IDOE.

Q: Do the TLA leaders become employees of the district once they are placed?

A: TLA leaders will likely work as employees in district and charter schools across the state.

Q: What data collection should be part of the plan?

A: The respondent may elect to suggest specific data indicators as part of their proposal. However, IDOE is keenly interested in output measures that clearly demonstrate the efficacy of Turnaround Leadership Academy participants.

Q: Will there be an external evaluator for this project?

A: IDOE does not expect to have an evaluation for this project independent of external evaluations that may already be conducted as part of Fast Forward.

Q: Do grant funds cover travel and stipends for the TLA leaders to attend training events?

A: The respondent may propose other costs as part of a comprehensive bid proposal.

Q: Must a response to this RFP include services that recruit, train from scratch, and place school principals or may a response offer to provide a subset of the services outlined in the RFP? Are vendors required to respond to all requested deliverables or may a vendor propose specific portions of the scope?

A: Successful responses will address the full scope of services outlined in the RFP.

Q: Must a proposed solution include all grade levels (K-12)?

A: The Turnaround Leadership Academy will equip leaders with the skills necessary to transform our state’s lowest-achieving schools. Many of these are middle and high schools, though there are also elementary schools that require bold and innovative leadership.

Q: May a vendor apply jointly with other vendors?

A: Yes.

Q: Are there specific budget limitations or considerations we should be aware of? Should all travel expenses be merged into the total cost of each deliverable?

A: Each respondent should provide their best and final offer in their cost proposal. Travel expenses may be included within each cost category, as appropriate.

Q: Will IDOE provide space/facilities for training?

A: No.

Q: Are there any restrictions on who can apply to participate in the TLA? For example, can a principal at a current underperforming school apply or are they automatically eliminated from the running?

A: IDOE expects the vendor to develop a rigorous recruitment and selection process. The vendor should be confident in each candidate's ability to engender rapid improvement as accountability of the academy will be tied to the success of TLA participants.

Q: In the event of a contract award, are there existing training resources and/or materials that we could utilize?

A: IDOE expects the vendor to provide all training resources and materials.

Q: Is there anything specific that needs to be submitted as part of the intent to file?

A: No.

Q: Is there a pre-proposal meeting for this RFP?

A: No.

Q: Is there a previous contract holder (incumbent)?

A: No.